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By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

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Proferet in lucem ſpecioſa vocabula rerum. HOR.

MR. FITZ-ADAM,

AS an Engliſhman, I gratefully applaud the zeal you ſhew for aſcertaining our language; and am equally ready to acknowledge the uſe and even the neceſſity of the NEOLOGICAL dictionary, mentioned in your laſt paper. I muſt however beg leave ſo far to diſſent from you as to doubt the propriety of joining to the fixed and permanent ſtandard of our language, a vocabulary of words which periſh and are forgot within the compaſs of the year.

THAT

THAT we are obliged to the ladies for moſt of theſe ornaments to our language, I readily acknowledge; but it muſt alſo be acknowledged that it would be degrading their invention to ſuppoſe they would deſire a perpetuity of any thing whoſe loſs they can ſo eaſily ſupply. It would be no leſs an error to imagine that they wanted a repoſitory for their words after they have worn them out, than that they wiſhed for a wardrobe to preſerve their caſt-off faſhions. Novelty is their pleaſure: ſingularity and the love of being before-hand is greatly flattering to the female mind. From hence ariſes the preſent taſte for planting, and the pleaſure the ladies take in ſhewing their exotics, as giving them an opportunity of talking Greek. With what reſpectful pleaſure do their admirers gaze while their pretty mouths troll out the Toxicodendron, Chryſanthemum, Orchis, Tragopogon, Hypericum, and the like?

FROM hence only can we account for that jargon which the French call the *Bon ton*, which they are obliged to change continually, as ſoon as they find it prophaned by any other company but one ſtep lower than themſelves in their degrees of politeneſs. A lady armed with a new word, exults with a conſcious ſuperiority, and exerciſes a tyranny over thoſe who do not underſtand her, like the delegates of the law, with their *Capias*, *Latitat*, and *Venire facias*: but a word which has been a month upon the town, loſes it's force, and makes as poor a figure as the law put into Engliſh.

IN order therefore to interpret every new word, and what is ſtill more important, to give the different acceptations of the ſame words, according to the various ſenſes in which they are received and underſtood in the different parts of this extenſive metropolis, I would recommend

commend a ſmall portable vocabulary to be annually publiſhed and bound up with the almanack. It is of great conſequence that a work of this nature ſhould be duly and carefully executed, becauſe though it is very grievous to be ignorant, it is much more terrible to be deceived or miſled; and this is greatly to be apprehended from the abuſe of turning old words from their former ſignification to a ſenſe not only very different, but often directly contrary to it. The coining a new word, that is to ſay, a new ſound, which had no ſenſe previouſly affixed to it, will probably have no other ill effect than puzzling for a while the underſtanding and memory: but what ſhall we ſay to the turn which the preſent age has taken of giving an entire new ſenſe to words and expreſſions, and that in ſo delicate a caſe as the characters of men? I remember when a certain perſon informed a large company at the polite end of the town, that, in the city, a GOOD MAN was a term meant to denote a man who was able and ready at all times to pay a bill at ſight, the whole aſſembly ſhook their heads, and thought it was a ſtrange perverſion of language. And yet theſe very perſons are not aware that the phraſes they commonly uſe would appear equally ſtrange on the other ſide Temple-Bar. A SILLY FELLOW, for inſtance, would there be thought a weak young man, who had been ſo often impoſed upon that he was not worth a groat; inſtead of that, it is the moſt common term for one who poſſeſſes the very fortune, talent, miſtreſs or preferment which his deſcriber wiſhes to have. In like manner, a SILLY WOMAN implies one who is more beautiful, young, happy and good-natured than the reſt of her female acquaintance. ODD MAN is a term we frequently hear vociferated

in

in the ſtreets, when a chairman is in want of a partner. But when a lady of quality orders her porter to let in no ODD PEOPLE, ſhe means all decent grave men, women who have never been talked of, many of her own relations, and all her huſband's.

BESIDES thoſe words which owe their riſe to caprice or accident, there are many which having been long confined to particular profeſſions, offices, diſtricts, climates, &c. are brought into public uſe by faſhion, or the reigning topic on which converſation has happened to dwell for any conſiderable time. During the great rebellion they talked univerſally the language of the ſcriptures. *To your tents, O! Iſrael*, was the well known cry of faction in the ſtreets. They beat the enemy *from Dan even unto Beerſheba*, and expreſſed themſelves in a manner which muſt have been totally unintelligible, except in thoſe extraordinary times when people of all ſorts happened to read the Bible. To theſe ſucceeded the WITS of CHARLES's days; to underſtand whom it was neceſſary to have remembered a great deal of bad poetry; as they generally began or concluded their diſcourſe with a couplet. In our own memory the late war, which began at ſea, filled our mouths with terms from that element. The land war not only enlarged the ſize of our ſwords and hats, but of our words alſo. The peace taught us the language of the ſecretary's office. Our country ſquires made *treaties* about their game and ladies *negotiated* the meeting of their lap-dogs. Parliamentary language has been uſed *without doors*. We drink claret or port according to the ſtate of our *finances*. To ſpend a week in the country or town is a *meaſure*; and if we diſlike the *meaſure*, we put a *negative* upon it. With the rails and buildings

ings of the Chineſe, we adopted alſo for a while their language. A doll of that country, we called a joſs, and a ſlight building, a pagoda. For that year we talked of nothing but palanquins, nabobs, mandarins, junks, ſipoys, &c. To what was this owing, but the war in the Eaſt Indies?

I WOULD therefore farther propoſe, in order to render this work compleat, that a ſupplement be added to it, which ſhall be an explanation of the words, figures and forms of ſpeech of the country, that will moſt probably be the ſubject of converſation for the enſuing year. For inſtance. Whoever conſiders the deſtination of our preſent expedition, muſt think it high time to publiſh an interpretation of Weſt India phraſes, which will ſoon become ſo current among us, that no man will be fit to appear in company, who ſhall not be able to ornament his diſcourſe with thoſe jewels. For my part, I wiſh ſuch a work had been publiſhed time enough to have aſſiſted me in reading the following extract of a letter from one of our colonies.

———" The *Chippoways* and *Orundaks* are ſtill very " troubleſome. Laſt week they *ſcalped* one of our In- " dians: but the *ſix nations* continue firm; and at a meet- " ing of *Sachems* it was determined *to take up the hatchet*, " and *make the war-kettle boil.* The French deſired *to* " *ſmoak the calumet of peace*; but the *half-king* would not " conſent. They offered the *ſpeech-belt*, but it was re- " fuſed. Our Governour has received an account of " their proceedings, together with *a ſtring of wampum*, " and *a bundle of ſkins to brighten the chain.*"

A WORK of this kind, if well executed, cannot fail to make the fortune of the undertaker: for I am convinced